

It is thus observed that the "y" portion of the amount which we pay for imports is simply the total of the sums which we receive from different countries for the kinds of remuneration mentioned, and the interest upon our capital invested abroad. This balance-sheet is not a fanciful picture or surmise: skilled investigators have from time to time (each confirming the other) made close estimates of the amounts which the country receives for shipping and other services, and for interest upon our foreign securities; and although, of course, in so difficult and intricate a question an equality of the account cannot be established to a pound, the figures are sufficiently exact to prove that when all items are taken into consideration the two sides of the balance-sheet very approximately agree. (*See Note B, p. 181.*)

Now the value of these debts, due to English merchants, shipowners, and investors—freight of vessels, insurance, charges, agency commissions, profits and interest—do not appear in the valuation of our Exports in these Returns, and hence, before our consideration of the apparent discrepancy between our Exports and Imports is concluded, we must add these receipts by us to the account. Is not the inference, or rather the assertion, justified, that the more the Imports exceed, the more impressive evidence is furnished to the extent of our national wealth? If a prudent tradesman be found, on examination of his acts, to be buying more articles than he sells, is he necessarily approaching bankruptcy, or is it not rather the income he derives from the accumulated fund of savings which his intelligence and skill have amassed, which enables him easily and justifiably to expand more widely in superior and more varied forms of comfort and even luxury? His additional expenditure (or imports), instead of indicating financial weakness and rashness, furnishes an index to his stability and prosperity. Equally so with the mass of individual traders who constitute mercantile England.

It is sometimes difficult to make a learner understand that imports of *goods*

form the necessary mode of payment of the prices of exported goods. The perplexity generally arises from the fact that the learner considers only an individual transaction instead of the mass of transactions which international corn-